

E Arlington Resident - Development of the Mugar Wetlands

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Dear Conservation Commission,

I am writing to oppose the development of the Mugar Wetlands. I own a condo in East Arlington and here are my reasons.

My husband and I bought our condo in East Arlington (96 Melrose St) in 2006. The seller had some oriental throw carpets on the basement floor. We didn't think about flooding and the proximity to the nearby marshlands. Within the first few years of living here there were 2 "100 year" rain storms. Our sump pump worked for days sometimes emptying 5 gals of water 3 or 4 times a minute for hours. We are lucky to only have pooling water come up through the concrete floor rather than flooding. There were people on Brooks Ave a half block away canoeing in the street with many feet of water in their basements.

Currently when there are heavy rains (4 or 5 times in the last few months) our sump pump runs and we have pooling water in the basement. The water table is not far below our basement floor. We walk our dog twice a day in the neighborhood so we see how many people are struggling with flooding basements. A month or so ago I saw a house on the corner of Brooks Ave. and Varnum with water gushing above ground from the basement. This was not a sump pump - it was a high water table.

I have been following the proposed development of the Mugar Wetlands for a few years since I attended a Select Board meeting where the developers wanted approval but had not submitted any plans. The Select Board unanimously did not approve. I have been a member of the Coalition to Save the Mugar Wetlands as a way to stay informed and to prevent a development which would make East Arlington flooding problems worse and negatively impact the wetlands and floodplain of the Alewife Reservation as a buffer for future storms (not to mention climate change).

I look to the Conservation Commission to do the right and smart thing to preserve, protect, and manage Arlington's wetlands and floodplains to serve their purpose for the future.

Thank you for your consideration

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ps - I'm an ordinary (often discouraged) citizen but it is of great concern to me that the amount of housing continually going up in Cambridge at Alewife and along Rte 2 adjacent to the wetlands and floodplain is astounding . I wonder if this has a well thought out master plan or is just rampant development. And now the Mugar property in Arlington which is actually mostly in the wetland. A

Belmont citizen said at the Select Board meeting to those of us who attended that they fought for 10 yrs to stop their development and lost.

The Mugar developmnt combines with another issue I follow that has eluded fixing for many years - the 5 CSO's that dump raw sewage into the Alewife Brook and the need for dredging the brook which has progressively more noxious sediments. It seems that small citizen groups have to organize and fight to stop or fix these things but it is a David and Goliath battle with not so good results.